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Istikharah

EASY STEPS, COUNTLESS BENEFITS



Hazrat Haji Shakeel Ahmad *Sahab.* (R.B)





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DBI



WHY WE DO NOT DO ISTIKHARAH?

This is sign of (hidden) disrespect for Allah (swt) that we fear to do istikhara and the reason for this is that we do not have faith on Almighty that whatever He will do will be for the good. We cling to whatever way we are inclined to as good; we limit ourselves to only what we consider so.



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FORWARD



Allah is All-knowing; All-Informed. He is aware of all things. On the contrary, the knowledge of a human being is limited. Man by nature, always has a strong desire to be successful in all his work. In spite of this instinct, sometimes he gets the desired results while some other time he faces loss.

To save ourselves from this loss, we have been given the gift of Istikharah—the great favor of Allah (swt). As it is mentioned in a Hadith that the Prophet Muhammad (saws) said, “The one who does Istikharah, never suffers from harm”. (Tirmidhi)

This book is a good collection of the articles regarding Istikharah collected from various Islamic books and for the sake of ease, suitable titles have been given to every aspect related to the main subject.

The importance of the Istikharah, its fact, need, exact way prescribed by Shariah and the false traditions in this regard prevailed in the society are explained clearly.

May Allah give us Tawfeeq to act upon the right path and save us from wrong doing! May He grant us to do Istikharah in every small and big task and make all our deeds successful by the virtue of Istikharah! (Ameen)

Was Salam

Shakeel Ahmed



In the name of Allah the most Gracious the most Merciful

IMPORTANCE OF ISTIKHARAH

Hadhrat Jabir(ra)reported that, the Messenger of Allah (saws) used to teach us the Istikharah (seeking guidance from Allah in all matters) as he would teach us any surah of the Quran. (Tirmidhi)

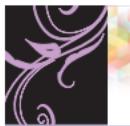
THE ONE WHO DOES ISTIKHARAH WILL NOT BE UNSUCCESSFUL

The prophet Muhammad (saws) said, “The one who does Istikharah will not get harm and the one who takes advice would not be regretful.”



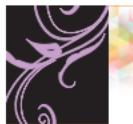
TO AVOID TO REQUEST GUIDANCE FROM ALLAH IS MISERY

From (the signs of) the son of Adam's prosperity, is his satisfaction with what Allah has decreed for him, and from the son of Adam's misery is his avoiding to request guidance from Allah and from the son of Adam's misery is his anger with what Allah decreed for him." (Tirmidhi)



THE ONE WHO DOES ISTIKHARAH IS LIKE ANGELS

From amongst the greatest benefits of Istikharah is that a man becomes detached from his carnal desire. His animalistic characteristics change into angelic nature and he hands himself over to Allah. When he does this, he reaches the status of angels, whose quality is that, they await the command of Allah. When Allah's command is received they exert themselves through divine motivation and not carnal motivation. I believe that excessive Istikharah is a proven tonic for the inculcation of angelic qualities. (Hujjatullahil-Balighah)



ISTIKHARAH DRAWS YOU CLOSER TO ALLAH AND CAUSES ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE WORK

Hadhrat Dr. Abdul Hay Arifi (rh) used to say that the one who turns toward Allah before he starts his task, certainly Allah helps him. After that great wonders can be undertaken by you in a short time and you cannot imagine about it. As you have made your firm relation with Allah, you have asked His blessing and you have been guided the straightway. As a result, you will find the right path on one hand; on the other hand you will have a good relation with Allah (swt) and will also get reward from Allah.



ISTIKHARAH FOR EVERY WORK

It is necessary to do Istikharah before you start any work—such as decision of marriage, business, journey etc. We should do Istikharah for all kinds of matters concerning one's life whether we are uncertain or not. As it is mentioned in the following Hadith:

Hadhrat Jabir (ra) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saws) used to teach us the Istikharah (seeking guidance from Allah in all matters) as he would teach us any surah of the Qur'an." That is why the one who does Istikharah will not face any harm.





WHAT IS ISTIKHARAH?

Istikharah is the practice of the prophet Muhammad (saws) which generally means to look for Allah's support and supervision (seeking divine guidance)—either one should do a particular work or not and it is done before putting the work into practice.





THE TIME OF ISTIKHARAH

There is no particular time for Istikharah. Some people understand that it should be done always at the time of sleeping in night or just after Isha Salah, while these are among the common mistakes of the public and a figment of popular imagination as well. While the fact is that whenever you get time (except Makrooh time) for Salah, perform two rak'at nafal salah of Istikharah and recite the supplication of Istikharah. There is no condition for Istikharah that it should be performed in day or night time or at the time of the sleeping or after waking up.





ISTIKHARAH SHOULD BE DONE FREE MINDEDLY

It is not the method of Istikharah that you do it only as a formality after you have made an intention about doing something. Istikharah should be done empty-minded to attain the wisdom and help of Allah in making the best decision. On the contrary, if you have already made your mind to execute something and later on you think that decision is the outcome of Istikharah, in fact, it is against the spirit of Istikharah.





THE EXACT WAY OF ISTIKHARAH

The prophet Muhammad (saws) said, “When anyone of you contemplates entering upon an enterprise, let him perform two rak'at of optional prayer other than fardh prayers and then supplicate. (Bukhari).

According to Sunnah, the easiest of Istikharah is to perform two rak'at of optional Namaz (non obligatory) in day or night time except in prohibited times with this intention: O Allah! this matter happened to me, decide the one which is better for me. After completing Namaz he should make Du'a in this regard. If anybody does not know this dua by heart, no matter he can read it by looking in the book.



THE SUPPLICATION OF ISTIKHARAH

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيُّكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ
بِقُدْرَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ،
فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَ
أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ -

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِّي
فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي وَعَاجِلِهِ وَ
أَجِلِهِ فَاقْدِرْهُ لِي، وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي، ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي
فِيهِ - وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِّي فِي
دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي وَعَاجِلِهِ وَ
أَجِلِهِ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْدِرْ لِي
الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ - (بخاري، ترمذ)

نُوٹ: ”هَذَا الْأَمْرَ“ پر اپنے کام کا تصور کریں۔

* When making the dua, the actual matter or decision should be mentioned instead of the words “hatdhul-amra” (“this matter”). One can say this in his mother tongue.



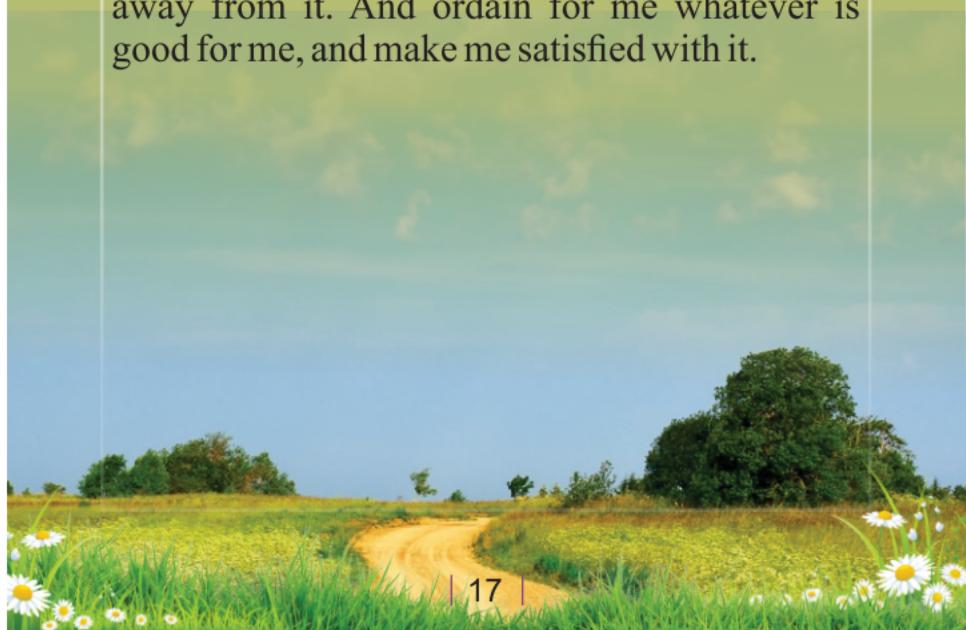
TRANSLITERATION OF DU'A

'Allahumma inni astakhiruka bi'ilmika, Wa astaqdiruka bi-qudratika, Wa as'loka min fadlika Al-'azlm Fa-innaka taqdiru Wala aqdiru, Wa ta'lamu Wala a'lamu, Wa anta 'allamu l-ghuyub. Allahumma, in kunta ta'lam anna hadha-lamra Khairun li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'qibati 'Amri (or 'ajili 'Amri wa'ajilihi) Faqdirhu wa yas-sirhu li thumma barik li Fihi, Wa in kunta ta'lamu anna hadha-lamra shar-run li fi dini wa ma'ashi wa'qibati 'Amri (or fi'ajili 'Amri wa'ajilihi) Fasrifhu anni was-rifni anhu. Waqdir li al-khaira haithu kana Thumma ardini bihi.'



TRANSLATION OF DU'A

O Allah! I ask guidance from Your knowledge, and Power from Your Might and I ask for Your great blessings. You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah! If You know that this job is good for my religion, my subsistence and for my life Hereafter --(or said: If it is better for my present and later needs)--Then You ordain it for me and make it easy for me to get, And then bless me in it, and if You know that this job is harmful to me In my religion and subsistence and in the Hereafter--(or said: If it is worse for my present and later needs)--Then keep it away from me and let me be away from it. And ordain for me whatever is good for me, and make me satisfied with it.





ISTIKHARAH FOR MARRIAGE

It is mentioned in a Hadith that the message of marriage should not be unveiled to others. One should make ablution and perform Salah as much as possible and then praise Allah Almighty wholeheartedly and then recite the following supplication:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَقْدِيرُ وَلَا أَقْدِيرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ،
وَإِنَّكَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، فَإِنْ رَأَيْتَ فِي فُلَانَةٍ
خَيْرًا لِّي فِي دِينِي وَدُنْيَايِّي وَآخِرَتِي فَاقْدُرْهَا
لِي، وَإِنْ كَانَ غَيْرُهَا خَيْرًا لِّي مِنْهَا فِي دِينِي
وَدُنْيَايِّي وَآخِرَتِي، فَاقْضِ -

Note: say instead of: “Fulanah” the name to whom you want to get married.



O Allah! You are capable and I am not. You know and I do not and You know the unseen. O Allah! If You know that she is better for me for my religion and my subsistence and in my Hereafter then You ordain it for me, , and if You know that she is harmful to me in my religion and subsistence and in the Hereafter-then keep her away from me and keep me away from her . And ordain for me whatever is good for me.

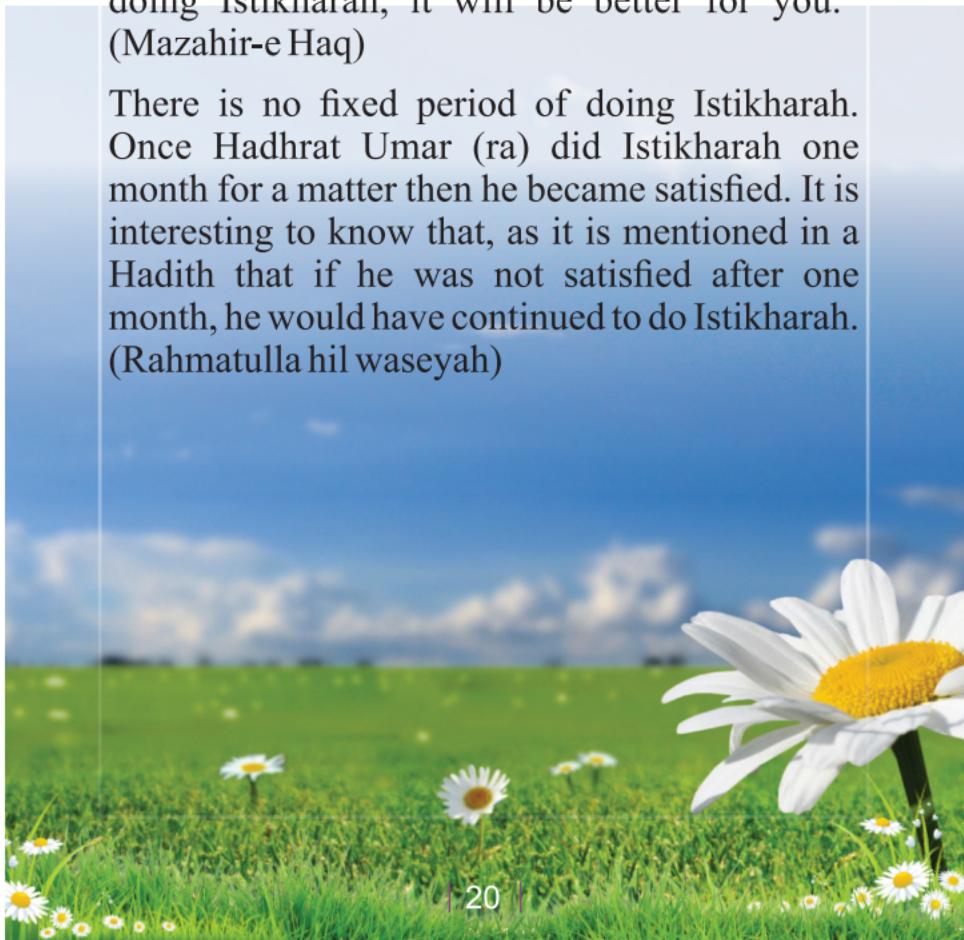


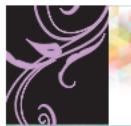


HOW MANY TIMES ISTIKHARAH SHOULD BE DONE

Hadhrat Anas (ra) narrates that the prophet Muhammad (saws) said to me, “Anas! When you want to do any work, you should do Istikharah about that work seven times. Then act accordingly whatever comes in your mind after doing Istikharah, it will be better for you.”
(Mazahir-e Haq)

There is no fixed period of doing Istikharah. Once Hadhrat Umar (ra) did Istikharah one month for a matter then he became satisfied. It is interesting to know that, as it is mentioned in a Hadith that if he was not satisfied after one month, he would have continued to do Istikharah.
(Rahmatulla hil waseyah)





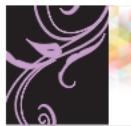
WHAT TO DO AFTER ISTIKHARAH?

After performing Istikharah with full awareness, the thing towards which the heart is inclined should be done without any hesitation. Believe! It would be better for you. If your heart is not satisfied or you do not find any kind of resource in existence to fulfill your work after Istikharah and your work remains incomplete, then, too, don't worry and believe in Allah that your goodness is destined in it. Over and above, you should believe after you acted upon the way of the Prophet (saws) that Allah knows better more than you about your benefit and harm. So whatsoever happens, it will be better for you, though, seemingly it does not sound good at all.



IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED

If confusion still remains after doing Istikharah then your purpose was attained, because post-Istikharah this is from Allah and it is best for you.



IF THERE IS HARM

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Umar (ra) says that when the slave of Allah does Istikharah, in return of his Istikharah, Allah decides something for him. But he (looking at the apparent result of His decision) complains to Allah (This work is not in my favour) while in accordance with ultimate result that is better for him.





GOODNESS COMES AFTER DOING ISTIKHARAH

Allah is most Gracious and most Merciful and His favours are innumerable and unique. He is aware of everything that exists in this world. He gives Tawfeeq to His slave towards such an act which is useful to be acted upon. So there is no need to think too much about the concerning matter and also it is not necessary to be shown the actual work in dream. To come the goodness of work in his knowledge also is not necessary. Likewise immediate satisfaction is not mandatory, as whatsoever is better, will surely take place. (Daure hazir ke fitne aur unka ilaj)





ISTIKHARAH FOR URGENT NEED

Sometimes it happens that we are in extreme need to take immediate decision. But we do not find chance to perform two rakats of salah and to recite the supplication of Istikharah. For such circumstances, the prophet Muhammad (saws) has told us the following supplications:

اللَّهُمَّ خِزْلِيْ وَ اخْتَرْلِيْ - (كنز العمال)

O Allah! Make it good for me and chose for me.
(Tirmidhi & Kanzul Ummal)

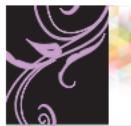
اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنِي وَ سَدِّدْنِي - (صحیح مسلم)

O Allah! Direct me to right path and make me adhere to the straight path. (Shih Muslim)

اللَّهُمَّ أَلْهِمْنِي رُشْدِيْ وَ اعْذِنْيِ مِنْ شَرِّ نَفْسِيْ -
(ترمذی)

O Allah! Inspire me from your guidance and me from the evils within myself. (Tirmidhi)

One can recite any of the above dua, or he can say in his own language as follows:



O Allah! This matter happened to me, guide me regarding it to the straightway. If he is not able to say by tongue then he can say in his heart: O Allah! Direct me to the right path. If Allah wills, the thing which is better according to Deen and Duniya will take place.





ISTIKHARAH AND FALSE THOUGHTS

It is falsely considered necessary regarding Istikharah that after performing Salah and dua one should do the following acts:

One should sleep

One should not talk with anyone

One should go to bed on right side

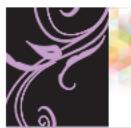
One should sleep facing the Qibla

One should wait for good and bad dream

One will see in his/her dream some black and yellow colors or light and darkness

One any pious person will show the preferable aspect in dream.

These notations are not authentic and derived out from Ahadith; rather they are a figment of popular imagination which has no references at all. (खुतबातु रशीद)



TO ASK SOMEONE TO DO ISTIKHARA

To ask someone to do Istikhara has no proof in the sight of shariah, though it is not a sin. But looking at the meaning of Du'a, the words of Istikhara themselves indicate that we should do it by ourselves. (Majalis-e Mufti Azam)

As in the age of darkness, people used to portend by writing on the arrows, in the same way, at present people are doing Istikhara by various wrong ways. In fact, these ways are absolutely against the teaching of Shariah. It adds fuel to the fire that now people have started doing Istikhara through T.V. and Radio. While Istikhara means just to make dua seeking Allah's (swt) guidance and help for goodness, not to find out information.

The prophet Muhammad (saws) instructed that a man should do Istikhara by himself for his desired work. Because, to ask someone else to do Istikhara has no proof in Islam.

It is worth mentioning here that when the prophet Muhammad (saws) was alive in this world, no one was more punctual than his companions regarding acting upon the Shariah. In spite of this clear truth, not a single Hadith indicates that the

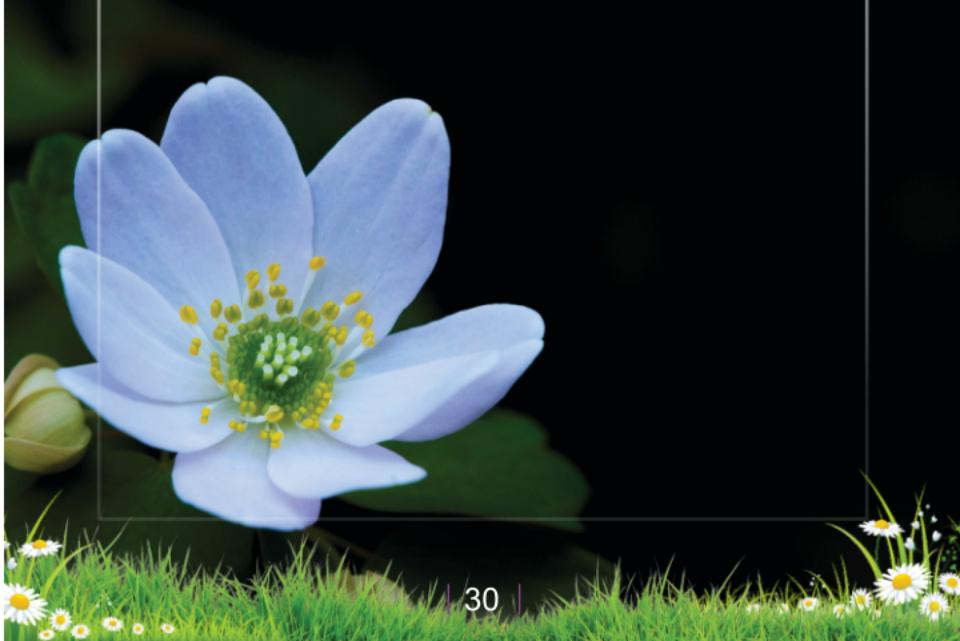


prophet Muhammad asked his companions to do Istikharah for him. Therefore, the best way prescribed by the Prophet (saws) is that the one who has any confusion in his matter he himself should do Istikharah.



TO ASK ANY SPIRITUAL PERSON OR AN ALIM TO DO ISTIKHARAH

Some people say that Istikharah should be done by some spiritual person or an Alim instead of common people like us. It is like to say that our Istikharah has no value in the sight of Allah. In fact it is a false delusion detached from the spirit of Istikharah. The clear instruction in this matter is that the one who is ambivalent or unsure about making decision regarding his work, must do Istikharah. Although it is not forbidden to ask someone else to do Istikharah, it is not Sunnah in any way as per the guidance of Prophet Muhammad (saws).

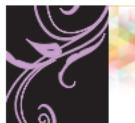




WE ARE SINNERS! HOW WILL WE DO ISTIKHARAH?

Some people say that, we are sinners then how can we do Istikharah? They should know that there is no condition in Istikharah that it should be done only by pious people. When Shariah has not fixed any condition then—who are we to fix such a condition?

Allah (swt) listens to every one's supplication whether he is pious or is a sinner. If someone does Istikharah as per the instructions of the prophet Muhammad (saws), Allah will surely accept his supplication. But, it is necessary to be regretful about past sins and to make firm intention not to repeat it. With this attitude our supplication would be accepted very soon, In' ShaAllah.



ISTIKHARAH IS NOT TO LOOK FOR AN OMEN

Some people look for an omen by Istikharah. Some other people understand that the past or event to come can be determined with the help of the Istikharah. While it is totally against the purposes of Istikharah as it was mentioned earlier in the definition of the Istikharah.





FOR WHAT WORK ISTIKHARAH SHOULD BE DONE

It should be noticed that, there is no need to do Istikharah regarding such things which are obligated by Allah (swt) or which are from the category of the Wajib or Sunnat-e Mu'akkadah. Likewise, it is not permissible to do Istikharah concerning such things which are forbidden by Shariah.

For example, one cannot do Istikharah about—whether should he perform Salah or not? Should he keep fast of Ramadan or not? In the same way One cannot do Istikharah about—should he drink wine or not? Should he take bribe or not? Should he do business in the field of video films or not? Should he take interest or not. In these sorts of work Istikharah should not be done at all. Because all of them are unlawful in the sight of Shariah. Likewise there is no need to do Istikharah about—should one search lawful livelihood or not. Because it is obligatory for everyone to gain lawful livelihood. Similarly, it is forbidden to do Istikharah regarding Hajj that—should one go for performing Hajj or not?

Yes, it is correct to do Istikharah to earn the lawful livelihood and to do job or to do business of cloth or something else.



Note: The conclusion is that we should adopt the sunnah of Istikharah for our own goodness but at the same time we should be very cautious about the conditions and ways of Istikharah.





AN IMPORTANT EVENT REGARDING ISTIKHARAH

Hazrat Zainab(rz) was given the proposal for marriage by the prophet Muhammad (saws). In fact beyond any iota of doubt, it was a great offer for her. But she, in spite of the happiness of the prophet Muhammad (saws) said, that I cannot take any step about my marriage until I consult my Lord (I will do Istikharah).

Really there was no proposal of marriage for Zainab(rz) better than which offered by the prophet Muhammad (saws) in the whole world. May Allah give the best reward to Hazrat Zainab (rz) who clarified the value and the importance of Istikharah by her work and give a wonderful message that, even if there is total good, even then you should do Istikharah. She was getting afraid that, lest she could not accomplish the rights of the prophet Muhammad (saws). This marriage will be a great trouble for her, if she could not complete her responsibility in his respect and obedience to him.

In this Book

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- * Istikharah should be done free mindedly
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- * The supplication of Istikharah



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